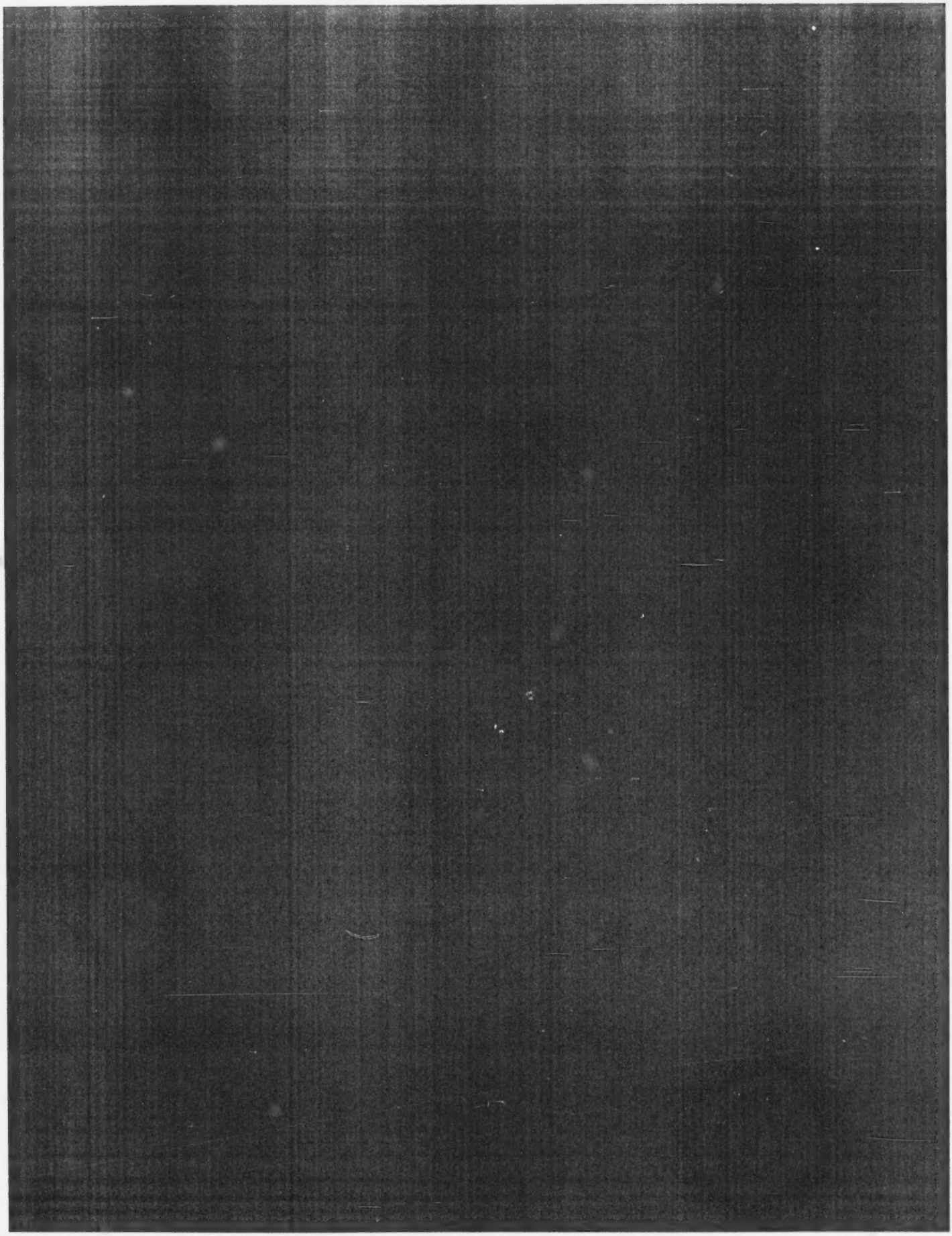
PERFORMANCE UPDATE 2008

Building and **Educating** Tomorrow's Workforce

Building and Educating Tomorrow's Workforce
Alberta's 10 Year Strategy

Alberta



Introduction

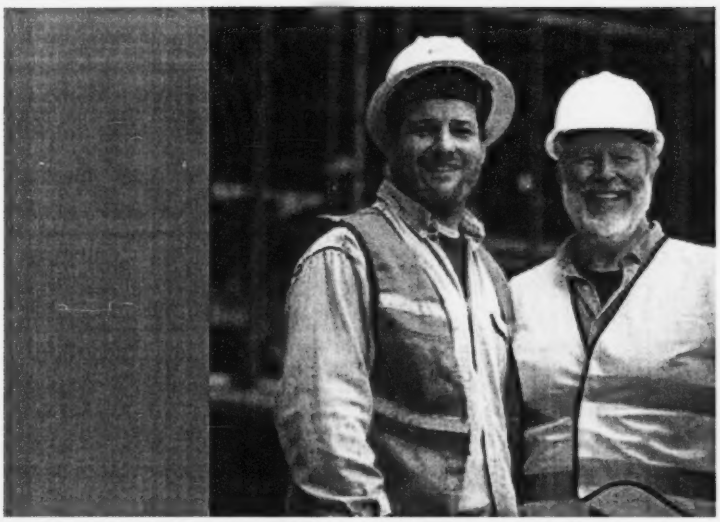
Since July 2006 when the Government of Alberta announced *Building and Educating Tomorrow's Workforce* (BETW), considerable progress has been made to Alberta's comprehensive labour force development strategy. Through collaboration and intensive efforts with our public and private partners, we are achieving the shared vision of a vibrant province with skilled, knowledgeable workers who contribute to and share in Alberta's economic prosperity.

BETW provides a strategic framework built around four themes: Inform, Attract, Develop and Retain. The strategy outlines the priority actions the Government of Alberta is pursuing related to these themes. The strategy has played a key role in stabilizing our tight labour market and will provide long term, strategic direction that will be critical to continued economic development in the province.

This document reports on the various BETW highlights and accomplishments under each theme during last year. Priorities for 2008-09 are also provided, along with an overview of the performance indicators for measuring success in meeting BETW goals.

The actions in this report show a commitment by the Alberta government towards improving Alberta's workforce. Many are the result of coordinated efforts across government ministries. Several have received media attention and have put Alberta into the national and international spotlight. All have contributed to the health and strength of Alberta's workforce.

The BETW strategy, along with companion documents developed since its release, is available at **www.employment.alberta.ca/betw**.



Inform

Goal: *Albertans and stakeholders have increased access to current, accurate and relevant education, career, workplace and labour market information needed to make informed career, workplace and labour market decisions.*

HIGHLIGHTS

- Expanded and enhanced Raising Awareness for Planning for Post-Secondary (RAPPS) initiatives, including enhancing Learning Clicks and Parent Clicks, launching additional mentoring pilots, increasing awareness of the Alberta Centennial Education Savings (ACES) program, and developing materials to reach different literacy levels. (AAET)
- Released *Construction Looking Forward* – labour requirements from 2008-2016, profiling the construction industry's labour requirements over the next eight years. (AE&I)
- Completed and released five industry sector workforce strategies: Energy, Construction, Manufacturing, Tourism and Hospitality and Non-profit and Voluntary. The strategies are industry led plans that identify labour force solutions. (AE&I)
- The Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website was redesigned for easier navigation and to provide better information. ALIS provides educational and career information to all Albertans. (AE&I)

Actions completed :

- Hosted the Alberta forum of the Pan-Canadian Interactive Literacy Forum held April 14-15, 2008, aiding the development of the Literacy Framework. (AAET)
- Developed and released industry and employer information products to inform Albertans of labour market opportunities and prominent labour force issues and initiatives, including the release of the BETW newsletter and updates to 12 industry sector Labour Market and Economic Indicators Dashboard publications. The dashboards present a series of economic indicators to identify labour and skill shortages or surpluses in industry sectors. (AE&I)
- Provided information, programs and services to help Albertans develop skills, find and keep employment, manage their careers and adapt to the changing labour market. (AE&I)
    - Career Information Hotline responded to 11,844 calls in the 2007/2008 fiscal year.
    - A Career Event for People with Disabilities was held in Calgary on November 6, 2007 to assist unemployed and underemployed Calgarians with disabilities learn about effective job search techniques, which focused on their abilities. Over 100 Calgarians and several employers attended the event.
    - Employer Connections events: a total of approximately 216 employer connections events were held across the province to match employers with potential employees.
- Updated occupational information:
    - Updated 170 occupational profiles and posted one new profile on OCCinfo.
    - Updated 11 CERTinfo profiles; posted one new CERTinfo profile.
    - Released the 2007 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey. (AE&I)
- Worked collaboratively with high schools to promote career, employment and training information and assisted students, parents and school staff with informed decision making as students move from school to further education or work.
    - Assisted 2,950 students in portfolio building, resume writing, career planning, educational planning, and provided orientation presentations to new students and parents.
    - Partnered with school districts to provide training and job placement for youth in rural areas. 4,777 students received/accessed career preparation services. (AE&I)

- Supported First Nations labour force planning initiatives and shared Aboriginal Labour Market Survey data with stakeholders. Aboriginal Labour Force Survey data is distributed monthly. (AE&I)

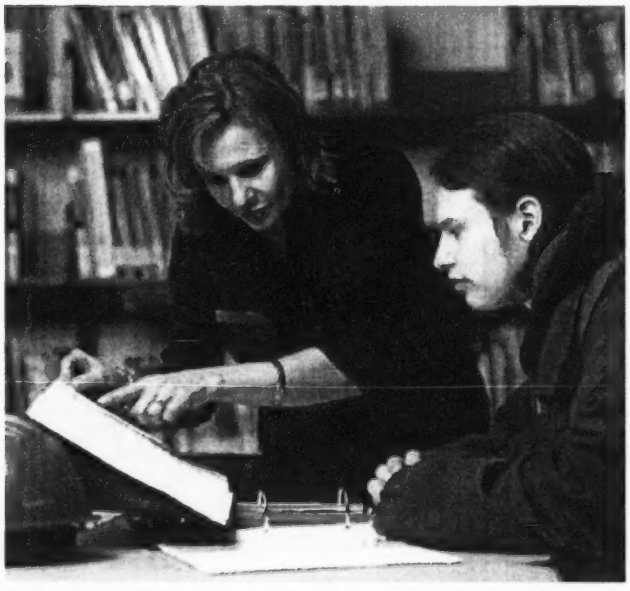
- Developed *Connecting Learning and Work: Alberta's Commitment to Career Development* to improve and support opportunities for Kindergarten to Grade 12 students to explore career opportunities and enhance transitions from school to further study or work. (AE, AAET & AE&I)

- *CAREERS: The Next Generation* encouraged 17,000 junior and high school students to consider careers in the trades by conducting workshops. *CAREERS* staff participated in 70 career fairs and worked with 600 employers to provide work experience opportunities and maintain partnerships with secondary schools, post secondary schools and employers. (*Careers: The Next Generation* receives funding from; AAET, AE&I, AE, AHW, AR and Alberta Finance and Enterprise).

- Released and regularly maintained the 2007-08 Alberta Transfer Guide listing all courses and program transfer agreements between post-secondary institutions in Alberta. (AAET)

- Added a searchable database of over 400 scholarships to the ALIS Scholarship Connections website. (AE&I, AAET)

- Enhanced the Planning for Post-Secondary Studies Guides to include guides for parents and students in grades 5, 6, 9, and 12, and a transition guide for students with disabilities. These guides are available in both English and French. (AAET)



Attract

Goal: *Alberta attracts the interprovincial migrants, immigrants and temporary foreign workers necessary to address labour force needs.*

HIGHLIGHTS

- Announced a Made in Alberta Approach to Immigration giving Alberta more control over the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP) and the recruitment of Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs). (AE&I)
- Nominated 4,297 people to the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP) formerly Provincial Nominee Program. Issued 1,658 certificates for principal applicants, with 2,639 dependants listed on the certificates. (AE&I)
- Published international education guides for several countries; assisting employers, professional licensing bodies and educational institutions in making accurate and efficient decisions,about foreign credentials. (AE&I)

Actions completed :

- Recruited 1,077 foreign workers to Alberta's agricultural sector, primarily through strong international recruitment missions. (AARD)
- Recommended 222 agricultural workers for permanent residence under the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (165 food processing workers, 57 skilled livestock workers). (AARD)
- Launched the Immigrate to Alberta web portal in November 2007, targeted to attract international workers to Alberta. (AE&I)
- Continued to prepare for full implementation of the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA) with British Columbia, working with more then 60 Professional Regulatory Organizations to ensure that maximum labour mobility will be in place between the two provinces once TILMA is fully implemented in April 2009. (AE&I, AIIR)
- Established Temporary Foreign Worker Advisory offices in Edmonton and Calgary to provide one-stop access to information and services for temporary foreign workers. This includes help resolving employment standards or occupational health and safety issues, and other support. (AE&I)
- Provided immigrant settlement services to; Brooks, Calgary, Edmonton, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Red Deer, through 17 agencies. Services include newcomer outreach, orientation, information and referral, interpretation and translation; supportive counseling, employment readiness, ethno-cultural collaboration and enhancing supportive communities. (AE&I)
- Promoted labour attraction at over 20 international events, from international trade shows to targeted occupational job fairs and general recruitment events. Marketed Alberta to overseas workers in the healthcare, hospitality and construction industries, amongst others. (AE&I)
- Distributed over 60,000 copies of a special issue of *English Express*, a newspaper for adults learning to improve their English language reading skills. The issue included a four page section called *Learning After High School* to assist children of these families in planning for post-secondary studies. (AAET)

Develop

Develop a High Performance Workforce

Goal: *Albertans gain improved access to the education and training needed to address short-term labour market demands and build long-term capacity to respond to future opportunities and challenges.*

HIGHLIGHTS

- Continued to make post-secondary education more affordable through the Affordability Framework, with actions such as reduced interest rates on Alberta student loans, an additional five per cent increase in student living allowances, enhanced exemptions for part-time earnings and scholarships; and increased annual student loan limits to $13,300. (AAET)

- Offered more than 6,000 additional apprenticeship technical training seats during the 2007-08 school year; which is a 21 per cent increase from the previous year. (AAET)

- Increased training, employment and economic opportunities for First Nations, Métis and Inuit people in Alberta, by spending $10.7 million to help Aboriginal people get the training they need to gain meaningful employment. Support was provided to 57 projects to train Aboriginal people as pipefitters, health care aides, truck drivers, drill rig workers and other occupations. (AE&I)

- Invested $6.5 million to support 24 projects from school jurisdictions and charter schools to identify promising practices that use technology to improve student engagement and high school completion. (AE)

- Designed and launched the project-based Innovation Fund program. The Innovation Fund provides project funding to support leading edge initiatives with the potential to transform Alberta's advanced learning system. (AAET).

Actions completed :

- Developed the Alberta Access Planning Framework (AAPF) to support planning within the province's post-secondary system, broadening access and ensuring that Alberta's post-secondary providers are more responsive to the needs of learners, the economy, and society. (AAET)

- As part of the $24 million commitment by the Alberta Government to the WorldSkills Calgary 2009 Competition, Alberta Advanced Education and Technology worked with Education and Employment and Immigration to support an Apprenticeship, Skills and Education Awareness Program targeting youth and educators. $1.7 million was provided to support this program. (AAET)

- Increased access to Post Secondary Education Programs for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD). The (PDD) Community Boards program ensures that adults with developmental disabilities have access to supports and funding. (ASCS)

- Hosted a two-day conference November 19-20, 2007, entitled *Promising Practices to Enhance High School Completion Amongst First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Students.* Sessions offered practical information, new insights and responsive strategies to teachers and administrators to support FNMI student success and foster high school completion. Under the Renewed Funding Framework, $1,093 in additional funding was provided for each self-identified FNMI student in the provincial education system. (AE)

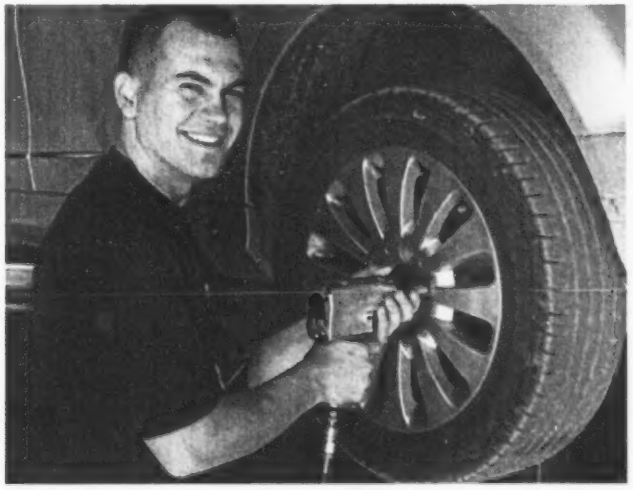
- In 2007/2008, $42.5 million was provided through the Access to the Future Fund in the form of matching grants to stimulate donations to the advanced learning system. The funding supports scholarships and bursaries, equipment, facilities, and endowed chairs. The 2007/2008 fiscal year marked the launch of the fund's project-based program, which provided nearly $8 million to enhance collaboration, innovation, and participation in the advanced learning system. (AAET)

- Six partnerships between employers and education and training providers were established under the Workplace Essential Skills Training Program. The program works toward upgrading the essential skills of workers such as Reading Text, Oral Communication and Computer Use.

- Under the Earn While You Learn program Alberta Employment and Immigration has exempted the employment earnings of all full-time students eligible to receive income support. This provides more Albertans with the financial resources to successfully complete their training. (AE&I)

- Signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Information Sharing between Alberta Education and Children and Youth Services. This action supports children in care who may be at risk of not completing high school. (AE, ACYS)

- Registered over 22,000 new apprentices in 2007, bringing the total number of apprentices being trained to more than 67,000. (AAET)



Develop High Performance Work Environments

Goal: *Alberta adopts all the characteristics of a high performance economy, such as improved workplaces and working arrangements, increased capital investment, technology adoption, and production process improvements.*

HIGHLIGHTS

- Partnered with IBM Canada and representatives of four First Nations and four Métis organizations to create opportunities to increase First Nation and Métis participation in the IT economy through employment, education and training, small business assistance and investment. (AAR)
- Increased the number of lean manufacturing assessments to 46, compared to 38 the year before, expanding the program to the public sector as well as the electrical generation and construction industries. After undergoing their lean assessment, 72 per cent of the companies surveyed were either satisfied or very satisfied with the process. (AF&E)

Actions completed :

- Increased automation and process improvement options in food processing. Eleven food processors analyzed potential improvement on worker productivity in the automation assessment project. (AARD)
- Completed a study on current worker shortages, productivity levels and economic impacts of worker shortages in the Agricultural sector. Key findings included a 15 per cent vacancy rate, 3,000 vacant positions, 33 per cent turnover rate, and a median worker productivity rate of $179 per hour worked. Labour costs are reported as the biggest cost pressure on profitability. (AARD)
- Developed a lean manufacturing communications strategy, including new promotional products to market lean thinking to sectors in Alberta experiencing severe labour shortages, as well as continuing lean marketing in select sectors such as Building Products and Metal Fabrication. (AE&I)
- Delivered lean consulting services to nine food processors to improve productivity and reduce costs. Three workshops to raise awareness of lean benefits were delivered to 70 people. (AARD)
- Provided $14.5 million to enhance and improve existing facilities and equipment used for Career & Technology Studies (CTS) courses to help students gain job skills and explore future careers. (AE)

Retain

Goal: Enhanced community and work attractiveness leads to more workers remaining engaged in Alberta's labour force.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Increased training efforts and support to help retain immigrants and their families in Alberta. Examples include offering English as an Additional Language and Immigrant Bridging programs, mentorship programs, study groups, referrals to language assessment services, and development of career resources dedicated to internationally educated professionals. (AE&I)

- Released a discussion document entitled *Mature Workers in Alberta and British Columbia: Understanding the Issues and Opportunities*. The document provides information on the demographic shift to an older population and corresponding workforce issues. (AE&I)

Actions completed :

- Continued to support communities, organizations, public institutions, and municipalities in developing educational initiatives that help foster equality and fairness and encourage the inclusion of all Albertans. Over $1.3 million was awarded in grants in 2007-08 through the Human Rights, Citizenship and Multicultural Education Fund. (ACCS)

- Provided 95 workshops through the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission on building inclusive and respectful workplaces that are aligned with human rights legislation in Alberta. (ACCS)

- Developed three migrant reports to study issues such as retention, education, employment and income to gain a better understanding of why Alberta workers choose to leave the province. (AE&I)

- Provided $2,500 to the Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations to help host a symposium for the voluntary sector in the Calgary Region. The purpose of the symposium was to bring together a broad range of agencies to help address staff attraction and retention issues. (AE&I)

- Contributed $60,000 to the Alberta Food Processors Association to develop retention strategies by offering front line supervisory skill training programs in Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary and Lethbridge (42 supervisors participated) and by providing direct coaching on worker retention strategies to eight companies. (AARD)

- Launched the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission's new website. It supports Albertans with improved access to information on preventing discrimination and building inclusive workplaces and communities. (ACCS)

- In response to a recommendation from *Investing in Our Future: Responding to the Rapid Growth of Oil Sands Development*, released in 2007 and also known as the Radke Report, Government invested an additional $19 million to provide the Fort McMurray Allowance to all employees who work for provincially-funded organizations. The recommendation called for attraction and retention allowances and benefits for government employees and its agencies to be consistent. The allowance for an eligible full time employee in 2007-08 was $1,040 per month. (TB)

Future Priorities and Actions

Human Capital Plan

The *Human Capital Plan* will be developed to complement BETW. It will look ahead anticipating pressures of growth and taking necessary steps to ensure Alberta has the skills required to enhance value-added activity and build a workforce to improve the long term sustainability of the economy. The outcome will be a strategic plan that will provide direction to government on how to best invest in Alberta's labour force. At the same time, the Alberta government will continue to work with industry and other stakeholders in addressing labour and skill shortages under the themes of BETW, placing a high priority on the following initiatives:

Inform

- Release industry workforce strategies for the supply-chain logistics, and healthcare sectors.
- Implement *Connecting Learning and Work: Alberta's Commitment to Career Development,* to improve and support Albertan's opportunities to explore career options and to enhance transitions from school to work or further study.

Attract

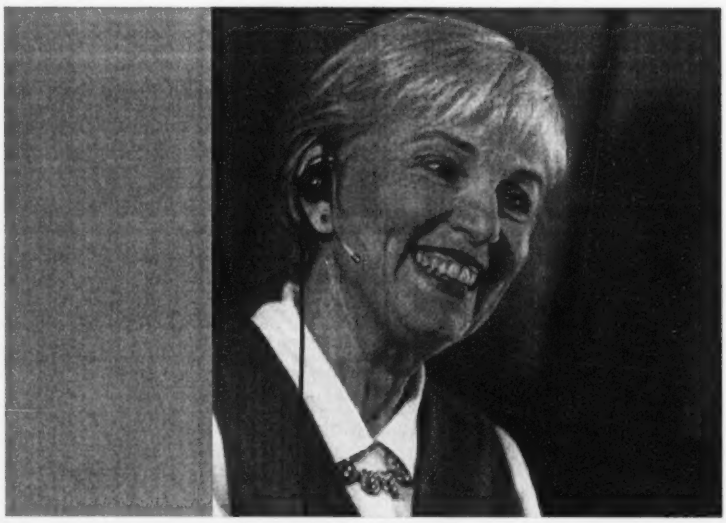
- Support immigrants and the immigration process by:
  - Increasing the number of international immigrants and temporary foreign workers,
  - Increasing settlement services through innovative pilot projects,
  - Implementing the Foreign Qualification Recognition Action Plan,
  - Continuing to support the recruitment of agricultural workers within Canada and internationally to fill vacant positions, and
  - Working with stakeholders to develop and implement a "practice-ready" assessment program for internationally educated physicians.

Develop

- In partnership with First Nations and Métis communities in Alberta, work together on developing FNMI Workforce Action Plan to increase participation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit in the economy.
- $11.8 million has been committed towards programs to support the employment, training and economic opportunities for the First Nations, Métis and Inuit populations.
- Continue to implement the Health Workforce Action Plan to address critical shortages in the health sector.
- Implement the Roles and Mandates Policy Framework for Alberta's publicly funded advanced education system.
- Develop and implement an Innovation and Research Roles and Mandates Policy Framework.
- Continue to expand apprenticeship initiatives to address shortages of skilled trades workers.
- Promote the Affordability Framework to increase access to post-secondary education for all Albertans.
- Continue to improve student engagement and high school completion rates to ensure all students achieve their full potential. A particular focus will be on increasing high school completion rates for First Nations, Métis and Inuit.
- Establish the Alberta Enterprise Corporation to encourage technology commercialization and increase the Canadian venture capital invested in Alberta.
- Provide cost shared funding support in a number of sectors to analyze options for automation and process improvements to increase worker productivity.

Retain

- Develop and implement a Mature Worker Action Plan to support increased retention and engagement of mature workers in the workforce
- Launch the next Alberta Science and Research Investments Program competition in coordination with the Canada Foundation for Innovation. The competition supports large-scale, innovative projects at post secondary institutions, helping to attract and retain workers with specialized knowledge and skills.
- Develop and implement the Education Workforce Framework for Action which includes strategies focused on the education sector.



Performance Measures

BETW identifies three main outcomes: more workers, better educated and trained people and innovative, productive work environments, with indicators and targets for each. Table 1 (pg. 17) identifies performance at the inception of the strategy in 2006, progress to 2008, and 2009 and 2016 targets. Progress towards the targets, appropriateness of the indicators and assumptions made in the development of the strategy are reviewed throughout the year. In some instances, adjustments have been made to measures and targets based on updated information to statistics and updates to trends and business plans.

Key assumptions:

- Alberta's economy will continue to grow.
- Alberta's labour force is aging, and population growth will be increasingly dependent on migration.
- There are limits to which under-represented groups can increase the total labour force supply.
- Labour and skill shortages are expected to persist.
- There is a need for increased productivity to reduce the growth in demand for new workers.
- The majority of new jobs will require some level of post secondary education.

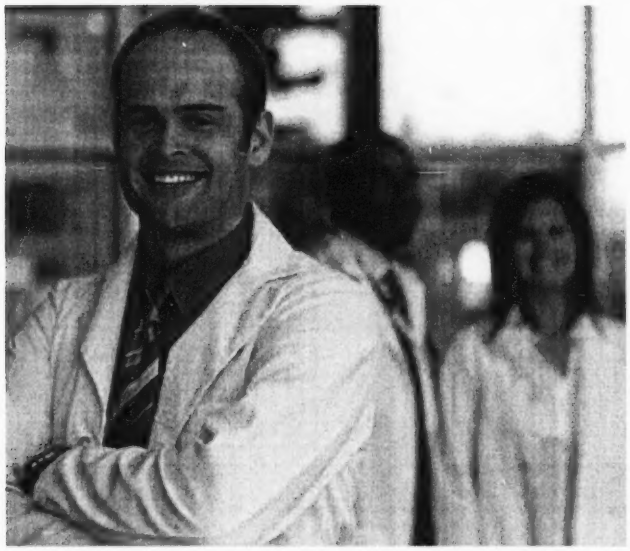
- Alberta is increasingly becoming a knowledge-based economy, and the labour force development strategy must not only focus on Alberta's current needs, but future needs.

In reviewing progress to date, these assumptions will hold true over the long-term. Under-represented groups such as First Nations, Métis and Inuit and immigrants are an increasingly visible part of Alberta's labour force and Alberta's overall population. With long-term labour and skill shortages forecasted, Alberta will have to continue to look at utilizing these and other under-represented groups.

To remain competitive, many employers are making changes to increase their productivity, increasing automation and making process changes. The result is that Alberta's productivity, as measured by real GDP per hour worked, continues to be the highest among the provinces. Skills gained through education are increasingly seen as crucial to increasing productivity and economic competitiveness. High school completion rates have shown significant improvement, and enrolments in apprenticeship programs have increased dramatically however overall post secondary completion rates remain a concern.

Table 1 – BETW Performance Measures

Outcomes	Indicators	Baseline Data 2006	Results Reported 2008	2009 Target	2016 Target
Improved supply of appropriately skilled, knowledgeable workers in the province.	Employment	1,870,700 (2006)	1,959,445 (2007 data)	2,051,000	Alberta has among the highest levels of employment growth in the country
	International immigrants arriving in Alberta	19,404[iii] 7.4% of total immigration to Canada	20,857[iii] (2007 data) 8.8 % of total immigration to Canada	24,000	10% of total immigration to Canada
Highly skilled, educated and innovative people	High school completion rate within 5 years of entering Grade 10	75.5%[iv]	79.5%[v]	79%[vi]	90%
	Albertans aged 25-64 that have completed post-secondary education	58%[vii]	59%[viii]	60%[ix]	Alberta has among the highest rates of post-secondary completion in the country.
	Employer satisfaction with the skills and quality of work of advanced education system graduates	90%[x]	88%[xi]	n/a (next survey conducted in 2009-10)[xii]	Alberta will achieve an employer satisfaction rate of 91% or greater.
High performance work environments that can make maximum use of innovation and technology.	Labour productivity (real GDP per hour worked)	$49.75 (2006) Alberta was ranked #1 of all provinces.	$48.72 (2007 data) Alberta was ranked #1 of all provinces.	Alberta's labour productivity will continue to be the highest in the country.	



Supplemental Information

Additional Statistics

	2006 Situation	2008 Situation	2008/2009 Target	2016 Target
Number of new apprentices (5 year average)	13,886 (2005)	17,817 (2007 data)	16,100	Alberta will have sufficient new apprentices to meet the on-going needs of industry

Forecasts - Some Potential Labour Force Pools

	2006 Situation	2008 Situation	2009 Forecast	2016 Forecast
Aboriginal off-reserve labour force	65,500[xiii]	71,400[xiv]	73,000	98,800
Net interprovincial migration	58,166 (2006)	10,625 (2007 data)	Top 3 in Canada	Top 3 in Canada
Federal Temporary Foreign Worker Program	15, 815[xv]	30,000[xvi]	35,000[xvii]	40,000[xviii]

Conclusion

A shared vision and a commitment to meet challenges have enabled the province to withstand tremendous change, both globally, nationally and provincially. Our progress so far stands as an example of how government and its partners can work together to achieve outcomes that neither could achieve alone. This is a success worth celebrating. At the same time, more needs to be done. The themes and priority actions underpinning BETW will continue to undergo constant scrutiny to ensure that Alberta is in the best position possible to address current labour and skill shortages and to develop a strong labour force for the future.

Acronym Glossary

AAR	Alberta Aboriginal Relations
AAET	Alberta Advanced Education and Technology
AARD	Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
ACYS	Alberta Children and Youth Services
ACCS	Alberta Culture and Community Spirit
AE	Alberta Education
AE&I	Alberta Employment and Immigration
AF&E	Alberta Finance and Enterprise
AHW	Alberta Health and Wellness
AIIR	Alberta International and Intergovernmental Relations
ASCS	Alberta Seniors and Community Supports
TB	Alberta Treasury Board

Endnotes

[i] Unless otherwise indicated, 2009 targets reflect anticipated performance in the 2008-09 fiscal year.

[ii] 2005. Citizenship and immigration Canada. (Revised)

[iii] 2007 unofficial data. Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Retrieved 26, 2007, IMM01a – Immigration Facts and Figures, Strategic Information Environment (SIE), Alberta Employment and Immigration

[iv] 2003-04. Alberta Education. (Revised)

[v] 2006-07. Alberta Education.

[vi] Alberta Education. (Revised)

[vii] 2005. Alberta Advanced Education and Technology

[viii] 2007. Alberta Advanced Education and Technology

[ix] Alberta Advanced Education and Technology. (Revised)

[x] 2003-04. Alberta Advanced Education and Technology

[xi] 2007-08. Alberta Advanced Education and Technology

[xii] Alberta Advanced Education and Technology

[xiii] Labour Force Survey, Statistic Canada

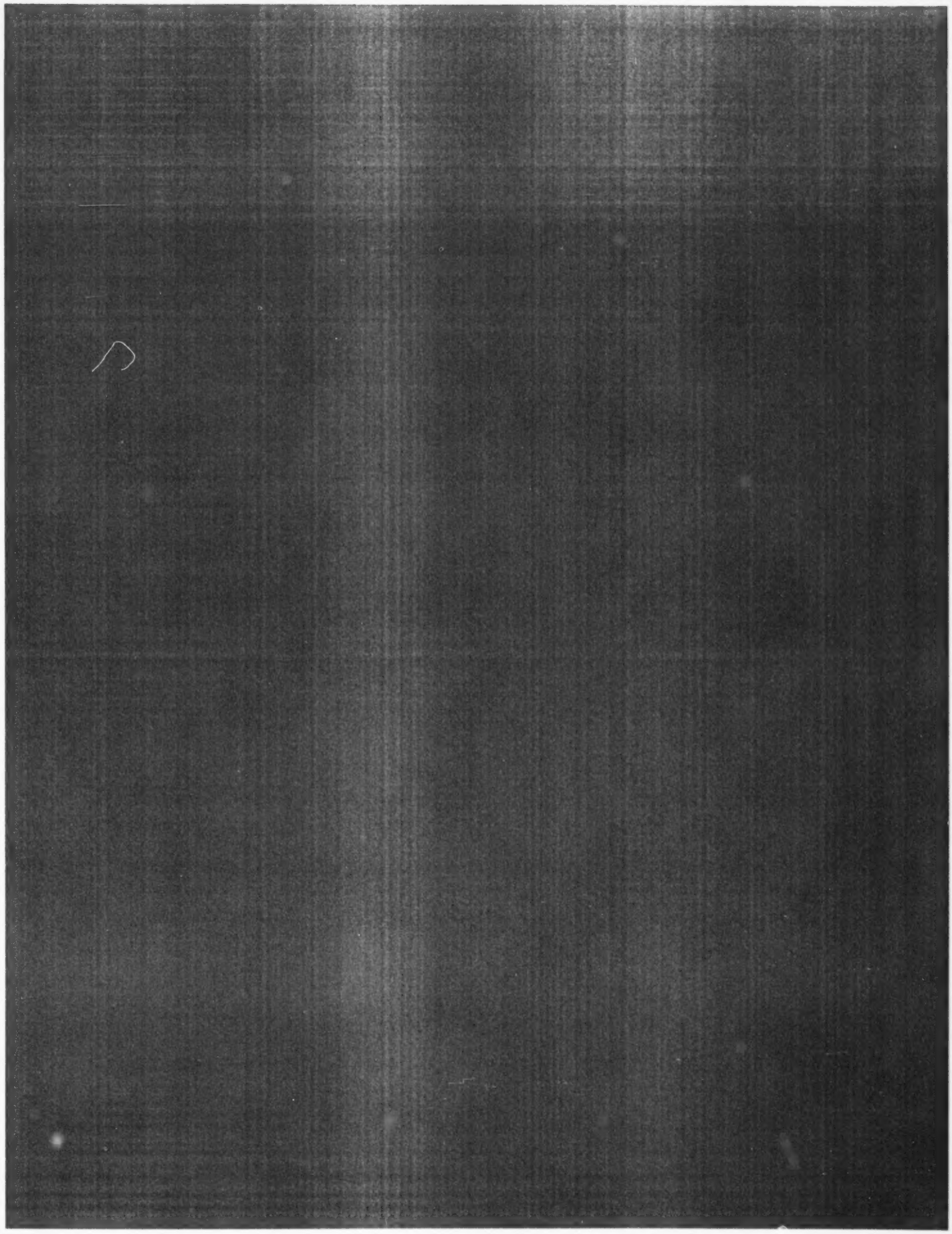
[xiv] Labour Force Survey, Statistic Canada

[xv] Estimated stock of foreign workers in Alberta based on recent trends. Alberta Employment and Immigration

[xvi] Forecast stock of foreign workers in Alberta based on recent trends. Alberta Employment and Immigration (Revised)

[xvii] Forecast stock of foreign workers in Alberta based on recent trends. Alberta Employment and Immigration (Revised)

[xviii] Forecast stock of foreign workers in Alberta based on recent trends. Alberta Employment and Immigration (Revised)



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